



wizard

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wizard

1. A person who knows how a complex piece of software or hardware works (that is, who groks it); especially someone who can find and fix bugs quickly in an emergency. Someone is a hacker if he or she has general hacking ability, but is a wizard with respect to something only if he or she has specific detailed knowledge of that thing. A good hacker could become a wizard for something given the time to study it.

2. A person who is permitted to do things forbidden to ordinary people; one who has wheel privileges on a system.

3. A Unix expert, especially a Unix systems programmer. This usage is well enough established that "Unix Wizard" is a recognised job title at some corporations and to most headhunters.

See guru, lord high fixer. See also deep magic, heavy wizardry, incantation, magic, mutter, rain dance, voodoo programming, wave a dead chicken.

4. An interactive help utility that guides the user through a potentially complex task, such as configuring a PPP driver to work with a new modem. Wizards are often implemented as a sequence of dialog boxes which the user can move forward and backward through, filling in the details required. [The implication is that the expertise of a human wizard in one of the above senses is encapsulated in the software wizard, allowing the average user to perform expertly.]

[Jargon File]

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